

REMARKS

Applicants are providing a Preliminary Amendment in an effort to place this application in condition for immediate allowance.

In this regard, Applicants (*i*) are eliminating all multiple-multiple dependencies, (*ii*) are canceling dependent Claim 16 and incorporating its recitation into independent Claim 15, (*iii*) are canceling independent apparatus Claim 19, and are introducing dependent Claim 20, which reflects the sub-range recited in Claim 6 as filed. Applicants are also making a few minor amendments so that the claims better comport with U.S. practice (*e.g.*, idiomatic American English).

Applicants ask that the Examiner kindly enter this Preliminary Amendment.

Upon entry of this Preliminary Amendment, there will be 19 pending claims in the present application (*i.e.*, Claim 3 is a multiple dependent claim counting as two claims). Accordingly, because Applicants have paid for the examination of 21 claims, no additional claim fee ought to be required. The Examiner, however, is hereby authorized to charge any required fee (or credit any overpayment) to Deposit Account No. 50-0332.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully asserts that Claims 1-15, 17, 18, and 20 are in condition for immediate allowance and respectfully request that the Examiner pass these claims to issuance.

Respectfully submitted,

/ Richard L. Additon /

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